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bride of fifteen or sixteen years, and he is Abbas Ali el Qassab, that wealthy merchant. His shop is said to be worth three thousand gold liras. And the matter was discussed and the broker passed much between the two merchants, and all was ready for a formal proposal. And Abdul Rashid Mejid said: First I will ask the mother of the girl and the girl, for this matter affects them. Then let matters take a formal course.

Abdul Rashid Mejid went back to his house, and his daughter and his wife brought him food. And when he had eaten of the food he said: There is good news for our little Salma. I will arrange for her to marry Abbas Ali el Qassab, so that she can live in a fine house and have servants of her own, nor shall she have to draw water or soil her hands with cooking, and she will be too grand to come and see her poor parents.

But Salma started crying and sobbing and she said: Abbas Ali has no front teeth and he dyes his beard and water runs always from his nose in the manner that it drips from the fronds of the palm trees when it rains. And she flung herself on the ground and her body was racked with sobs. And her mother said to her father: Don't worry, I will talk her round. I was like this when they told me I had to marry you.

Next morning at dawn Salma ran to the river and Kadhim took her in his arms, for she was sobbing and trembling like a tent in the wind. And she related to Kadhim what had passed between her and her father. And he asked: What price does your father want for you? And she replied: Eighty gold liras.

Then Kadhim said to the girl Salma: Do not weep and do not fear, for on the day that Abbas Ali el Qassab puts on his sword and mounts his horse to ride in procession to